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Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

January 12, 2009

St. Mary's 113 B; 1:00 PM

Present: P. Benson, D. Biers, D. Darrow (presiding), G. Doyle, H. Gauder, J. Greenlee, N. Jolani, R. Kearns, L. Laubach, J. Saliba,

Absent: A. Reichle, A. Seielstad

Guest: J. Farrelly (Faculty Board)

Opening Prayer: Lloyd Laubach opened the meeting with a prayer.

Roll Call: Ten of twelve members of the committee were present.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of December 15, 2008 were approved as amended.

Announcements:

George Doyle was welcomed back after being absent for several weeks.

Old Business

Academic Policy Committee –

- a. The APC reviewed the proposal to revise the Quantitative Reasoning Competencies, made a few changes, and forwarded it to the ECAS.
- b. There was extensive discussion on the Common Academic Program (CAP) response from the faculty. There were quite a lot on comments from many sectors of the campus. Responses from SBA and SOEAP are still pending. The committee will identify common concerns/suggestions, and respond to the ECAS and faculty as to the present status of the document. The APC expects to significantly rework the CAP document.

Faculty Affairs Committee –

- a. The FAC has started discussions on the “Stop-the-Clock” document.
- b. It was suggested that a large number of women faculty will attend the January 23 Senate meeting to support the revised Maternity Policy.

Student Academic Policies Committee –

- a. The SAPC will continue to look at the faculty evaluation process.
- b. An article on on-line faculty evaluation from the University of Michigan was distributed.

Senate Agenda for January 23, 2009

Maternity Leave Policy

- a. It was pointed out that the document is consultative, and will be forwarded to the Human Resources Committee for further disposition.
- b. Joyce Carter (Vice President of Human Resources) will be invited to the Senate meeting.
- c. While this document pertains only to faculty, it is likely to have an effect on some staff benefits.

Quantitative Reasoning Competencies: Several friendly amendments were suggested to the document that will be presented to the Senate on January 23.

a. Near the end of the DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL the document states “Students are given a choice between calculus and statistics because we recognize that mastery of both skills is not necessary to be educated in a mathematical outlook and way of thinking.” It was suggested that the sentence is not appropriate. While calculus is not necessary for most, surely statistics is necessary for those required to pass calculus, and therefore necessary for all students.

b. The third bullet under Rationale states: “employ commonly useful mathematical and statistical methods to solve problems.” If “mathematical” refers to calculus, this rationale contradicts the statement above that both skills are not necessary.

c. Under **Analysis Track** it should be mentioned that this track is appropriate for engineers as well as science or business majors.

d. Under Completing the Analysis Track, MTH 138, 149 and 169, and maybe others should be included in courses that will count as passing the competencies.

Academic Conference Grant

The Senate will be informed of a new procedure that students may use to obtain financial aid to attend a conference.

New Business

There were several issues brought forth concerning the academic calendar, especially as related to the final test schedule, study days, and semester breaks.

- a. In the fall 2008 semester the last class was a Friday and the first test was scheduled for Saturday – there was no study day between classes and tests
- b. Saturday testing was introduced, with a study day in the middle of the finals so as not to frontload study days, rectifying a previous complaint by many students.
- c. Study days and semester breaks only became common at UD recently, thereby substantially increasing the length of school year.
- d. Many students would rather skip the study days and finish finals earlier.
- e. Many faculty do not believe that study days or semester breaks improve academic learning.
- f. It was suggested that we need to assess whether study days and semester breaks are beneficial to student learning.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Monday, January 26, 2009 at 1:00 pm in St. Mary’s 113 B;

Respectfully Submitted By:

George R. Doyle, Jr.

Secretary of the Senate